INTRODUCTION

The civil disturbances in American cities during the 1960s and the subsequent reports by the Uniform Crime Reports Section of the Federal Bureau of Investigation generated and reflected a keen interest in the policing in the nation's cities. As a political slogan, "law and order" became a primary concern of millions of Americans. Task force reports authorized by President Lyndon B. Johnson under the direction of the Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice investigated many aspects of criminal justice and crime.[1] These papers, along with others published by various commissions, studied the ability of the police to deal with the conditions of social change in urban society.

The task force reports and findings of the investigating commissions rekindled the interest in professional police service that had existed during the years immediately preceding and following the Second World War. An outpouring of material, largely by scholars of the developing academic police science programs in West Coast universities, debated the potential for professionalism in police service.

The work produced to date has been primarily theoretical, intending to suggest methods of professional development rather than to analyze the historical conditions influencing the development of professional police service in the United States.[2] These studies provide essential insights into the motivations and goals of men aspiring to achieve professional status. The authors, many of whom either are now policemen or were previously associated with law enforcement agencies before becoming academics, constitute an intellectual vanguard that is establishing ideals for professionalism in police service—if, indeed, professionalism in police work is accepted as a possibility.

Until the recent upsurge of interest in urban history, police history in the United States received only a minimum of attention from historians. Numerous popular histories, or in some cases recollections by former police officials, were written during the nineteenth century, but in most cases these studies offered little in the way of understanding the development of law enforcement in the United States.[3] Later studies by Raymond B. Fosdick and Bruce Smith provide general surveys of the American police establishment, with emphasis on the administrative problems of policing.[4] Recent books by Roger Lane and James F. Richardson outline in detail the transformation in function and administrative organization of the Boston and New York police departments during the course of urbanization. Both

studies conclude at the close of the nineteenth century, and neither approaches the subject of police service as a developing profession.[5] A recent collection of essays by Richardson briefly surveys several issues of urban law enforcement, including civil service, police administration, bureaucratization, and professionalization. The essays, based primarily on secondary sources and recent government reports, trace some of the developments that have occurred in urban policing and offer some possibilities for the future.[6]

None of the studies noted above places the development of the professional ideal in police service in its historical perspective. To understand this important movement in a vital area of community service, the development must be analyzed in a historic context by examining those factors which encouraged—or retarded—its growth, Police officers, possibly more than any other aspiring professionals, have been affected by conditions and circumstances over which they have had minimal control. The direction of the institutional growth of municipal police service was dictated by local political events and changes in the legal status of police officers. Study of the changing role of the police in urban society, the relationship between the police and city politics, and efforts at police reform will serve as the means of tracing the growth of responsible law enforcement. These factors have had an incalculable impact on police behavior and development, and are reflected in the attitudes of police officers toward their status in the community, which have changed since the end of the Second World War.

To evaluate the impact these influences have had on police professionalization, it is necessary to trace the relationships between the police and the community, particularly the relationship of law enforcement to the shifting needs of the community. Moreover, we must examine the police self-image as an indicator of the growth of professionalism in police service. The policeman's own ideal of his role motivates him to form professional associations and to act collectively, in a limited sphere, to achieve whatever goals he deems necessary for upgrading the occupation to professional status.

The movement toward professional police service in the United States is a development of the twentieth century. The transformation of society from agrarian to industrialized urban required specialized services and quickened the process of professionalization in many occupations to a degree which had previously been unknown.[7] Medicine, for example, was a full-time occupation by approximately 1700, but did not devise a nationwide code of ethics in the United States until 1912, when the American Medical Association sought to bring the codes of the various state associa-

tions into conformity with a general statement of ethical standards. In contrast, professionalization of public accountants quickly filled a pressing need for specialists to deal with the complexities of taxation laws and corporate business auditing. Certified public accountants achieved full-time occupational status in the nineteenth century, established their first training school in 1881, and founded a national professional association in 1887, followed in 1917 by the formulation of a code of ethics.[8] New professions developed rapidly. Social work, considered by some writers as a marginal profession, was a product of the social dislocations created by an urban environment.[9] City management and city planning are two occupations presently in the process of professionalization, owing their existence to the problems of urban society. The nature of the new professions reflects the impact of technology, and its concomitant urbanization, on modern life.

As with social work, city planning, city managing, and other aspiring professional occupations, the nineteenth century was the formative period in the development of modern police work. Policing the country's fledgling towns and cities during the colonial period began as a part-time volunteer assignment imposed upon the private citizens of the communities. The inconvenienced citizenry soon hired night watchmen to patrol the streets. In some areas, particularly in the South, militia units supplemented the use of night watchmen. Until the 1840s, even the large cities were protected by a patchwork of officers—night watchmen, day constables, city marshals, and sheriffs—who were frequently paid by means of rewards and fees. Salaried police departments organized under one authority did not exist. But in the mid-nineteenth century the turmoil of the urban centers necessitated a more efficient means of police organization.[10]

Reorganization of the American police service was foreshadowed by the establishment in 1829 of the London Metropolitan Police Force. Sir Robert Peel's "bobbies" provided London for the first time with a full-time police force centralized under one authority and compensated with a salary instead of rewards.[11] More important than the organizational innovation was the concept of police work as a specialized service to the community.

Patrick Colquhoun, the nineteenth-century Scottish economist and reformer, recognized as early as 1806 that policing, as a part of the judicial process and as a service, was a new science.[12] But the present service ideal, an intrinsic attribute of police professionalism, was rooted in the standards and official conduct set by Peel for the Metropolitan Police.[13] Peel stressed the preventive role of the police rather than the punitive aspects, in which the police served more as agents for the executioner than as protectors of the community. In a modern police science manner, he emphasized the importance of establishing good community relations to earn the respect and cooperation of the citizens. Moreover, he stressed that as servants of the

public, police officers were bound to honor and protect the rights of all persons. In his instructions to the commissioners of his new police force, Peel cautioned that a constable

> must be civil and obliging to all people of every rank and class. He [the constable] must be particularly cautious not to interfere idly or unnecessarily in order to make a display of his authority;... He must remember that there is no qualification so indispensable to a police officer as a perfect command of temper, never suffering himself to be moved in the slightest degree by any language or threats that may be used; if he do his duty in a quiet and determined manner, such conduct will probably excite the well-disposed of the bystanders to assist him, if he requires them.... Particular care is to be taken that the constables of the police do not form false notions of their duties and powers.[14]

To achieve these ambitious goals Peel established the strict personnel qualifications that are still demanded today for responsible police service. In a radical change from precedent, Peel recommended that the "previous character" of all candidates be investigated "to secure as efficient persons as possible" and only "men of respectability" who could be depended upon to use discretion in their contact with the public. Political patronage was viewed as the "chief danger...of the new system" and every precaution was taken to avoid such manipulation. Promotion depended upon "good conduct."[15]

Between 1844 and 1860 cities in the United States attempted to imitate the organization of the London system by integrating night watchmen and day policemen under one authority. By the beginning of the Civil War this had been done in the major cities. New York City was the first to reorganize its police in 1844, with Chicago following in 1851, Cincinnati and New Orleans in 1852, Boston in 1854, and Baltimore in 1857.[16]

The consolidation of the police failed to achieve the occupational stability and respectability that accompanied the creation of the London Metropolitan Police. Unlike the Metropolitan Police Force, which was centralized under the authority of the Home Secretary and free of local political manipulation, its American counterparts remained decentralized under the authority of individual municipalities.

Under the federal system of government, policing in the United States fell under federal, state, county, and municipal control, and in many instances became subject to local political patronage. As political hirelings, police officers served at the discretion of city bosses—or as long as the city administration that appointed them remained in office. The political spoils system, which permeated the offices of nearly all urban municipalities, was the most detrimental influence on the growth of responsible law enforcement in the United States. Control of police departments was a valuable perquisite for city administrations because of the ready rewards provided by

police appointments and promotions. Moreover, discriminatory enforcement laws, particularly those dealing with gambling and vice, furnished even greater opportunities to repay debts for election contributions and support. Inadequately paid, untrained, and distrusted by the citizens they were hired to serve, the police in the United States began their history under adverse conditions.

NOTES

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1. Forty-four reports were compiled by the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice. Of these, eleven volumes deal specifically with the police. They are: *Effective Police Organization and Management, Consultant Paper* (Washington, D.C., 1967); *Field Survey III, Crime and Law Enforcement in Major Metropolitan Areas* (Washington, D.C., 1967); *Field Survey V, A National Survey of Police and Community Relations* (Washington, D.C., 1967); *The Police and Corruption, Consultant Paper* (Washington, D.C., 1967); *Police Compensation, Consultant Paper* (Washington, D.C., 1967); *Police Expenditures, Consultant Paper* (Washington, D.C., 1967); *Police Firearms Use Policy, Consultant Paper* (Washington, D.C., 1967); *The Police, Task Force Report* (Washington, D.C., 1967); *Recruitment, Selection, Promotion and Civil Service, Consultant Paper* (Washington, D.C. 1967;) *Report on Police Field Procedures, Consultant Paper* (Washington, D.C., 1967); *The Role of the Police, Consultant Paper* (Washington, D.C., 1967).

The United States Commission on Civil Rights issued two studies pertaining to police service: *Law Enforcement—A Report on Equal Protection in the South* (Washington, D.C., 1965); and *Who Will Wear the Badge* (Washington, D.C., 1971).

2. Among the numerous studies in the field are: Thomas J. Aaron, "Education and Professionalism in American Law Enforcement," *Police* (November-December, 1965): 37-41; Wallace D. Beasley, "Police Education—The Key to Professionalization," *Texas Police Journal* **17** (July, 1967): 15-21; *Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology and Police Science,* hereafter cited as *J.C.L.*, **61** (September, 1970): 438-445; Harry Caldwell, *Basic Law Enforcement* (Pacific Palisades, 1972), pp. 138-139; Edward M. Davis, "Professional Police Principles," *Federal Probation* **35** (March, 1971): 29-34; R.J. Dompka, "A National Police Standards Act—The First Step Toward Professionalism?" *Law and Order* (July, 1971): 86-90; A. C. Germann. "Education and Professional Law Enforcement," *J.C.L.* **58** (December, 1967): 603-609; A.C. Germann, "Changing the Police—The Impossible Dream?" (September, 1971): 415-421; Robert J. Jagiello, "College Education for the Patrolman—Necessity or Irrelevance?" *J.C.L.* **62** (March, 1971): 114-121; Don L. Kooken, "Ethics in Police Service," *J.C.L.* **38** (May-June, 1947): 61-74; George L. Kelling and Robert B. Kliesmet, "Resistance to the Professionalization of the Police," *Police Chief* **38** (May, 1971): 30-39; John P. Kenney, "The Growing Professionalization of Law Enforcement Service," reprint from *Trojan-in-Government* (August, 1956): 2-7; Carl F. Lutz, "Overcoming Obstacles to Professionalism," *Police Chief* **35** (September, 1968): 42-52; Gordon E. Misner, "Mobility and the Establishment of a Career System in Police Personnel Administration," *J.C.L.* **54** (December, 1963): 529-539; E.W. Roddenberry, "Achieving Professionalism," *J.C.L.* **44** (May-June, 1953): 109-115; Charles F. Sloan, "Police Professionalism," *J.C.L.* **45** (May-June, 1954): 77-79; W.J. Snyder, "The Association for Professional Law Enforcement," *J.C.L.* **47** (Jan.-Feb., 1957): 601-605; Dale H. Speck, "Los Angeles Has a Plan for the Police Profession," *Journal of California Law Enforcement* **5** (January, 1971): 106-111.

Among the studies dealing with the nature of professionalism in general, some of the most useful are Howard M. Vollmer and Donald L. Mills, eds., *Professionalization* (Englewood Cliffs, 1966); J.A. Jackson, ed., *Professions and Professionalization* (Cambridge, England, 1970); and Morris L. Cogan, "Toward a Definition of Profession," *Harvard Educational Review* **23** (Winter, 1953): 33-49; Eliot Freidson, ed., *The Professions and Their Prospects* (Beverly Hills and London, 1973); Everett C. Hughes, *The Professions in America* (Boston, 1965); Wilbert E. Moore, *The Professions: Roles and Rules* (New York, 1970).

3. Some examples of these early works are Augustine E. Costello's *Our Police Protectors, History of the New York Police from the Earliest Period until the Present Time* (New York, 1885); G.M. Roe's *Our Police, A History of the Cincinnati Police, from the Earliest Period until the Present Day* (Cincinnati, 1890); and Edward H. Hartwell's *Police Records and Recollections; or Boston by Daylight for Two Hundred and Forty Years* (Boston, 1873).

4. Raymond B. Fosdick, *American Police Systems* (1920; reprint ed., Montclair, 1969); Bruce Smith, *Police Systems in the United States* (New York, 1949).

5. Roger Lane, *Policing the City: Boston, 1822-1885* (Cambridge, 1967); James F. Richardson, *The New York Police: Colonial Times to 1901* (New York, 1970).

6. James F. Richardson, *Urban Police in the United States* (Port Washington, N.Y. and London, 1974). Richardson's treatment of the influence of bureaucratization on the police function, while brief, is welcome, for the subject has long been neglected. Most of the important studies dealing with bureaucratization approach it outside the context of law enforcement. The classical analysis of the subject is Max Weber, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology,* edited and translated by Hans H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York, 1958), pp. 196-244. An updated collection of essays dealing with the various aspects of bureaucratization is found in Oscar Grusby and George A. Miller, eds., *The Sociology of Organizations: Basic Studies* (New York and London, 1970). The relationship between professionals and the bureaucracy is the subject of W. Richard Scott, "Professionals and Complex Organization," in Vollmer and Mills, eds., *Professionalization,* pp. 264-275.

The direct implications of bureaucratization on the police service are given brief discussion in Kelling and Kliesmet, "Resistance to the Professionalization of the Police," pp. 30-39, and Richardson, *Urban Police in the United States,* pp. 121-132.

7. The proliferation of occupations aspiring to achieve professional status has led one writer to question whether the present trend will result in the professionalization of everyone. Harold L. Wilensky, "The Professionalization of Everyone?" *American Journal of Sociology* **70** (September, 1964): 137-158.

8. John L. Carey, "The Ethics of Public Accounting," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* **297** (January, 1955): 1-8; see also Paul D. Montagna, "The Public Accounting Profession: Organization, Ideology, and Social Power," in Freidson, ed., *The Professions and Their Prospects,* pp. 135-152.

9. Wilbert E. Moore, *The Professions: Roles and Rules* (New York, 1970), p. 73; Wilensky, "The Professionalization of Everyone?" p. 143. For a careful analysis of social work as a developing profession, see Roy Lubove, *The Professional Altruist: The Emergence of Social Work as a Career, 1880-1930* (Cambridge, 1965).

10. For a general study, which is useful for the earliest phase of police development in several major American cities, see Seldon Daskam Bacon, "The Early Development of American Municipal Police: A Study of the Evolution of Formal Controls in a Changing Society" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1939). A more recent study by George Austin Ketchem, "Municipal Police Reform, A Comparative Study of Law Enforcement in Cincinnati, Chicago, New Orleans, New York and St. Louis, 1844-1877" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Missouri, 1967), examines specifically the movement to consolidate the police departments in five leading American cities. For the development of police service in antebellum New Orleans with particular attention to its social and political aspects, see

Louis J. Marchiafava, "The New Orleans Police Department, 1852-1860: The Road to Reform" (unpublished M.A. thesis, Louisiana State University in New Orleans, 1972).

A general survey of the early development of the American police system is found in chapter 2 of Raymond B. Fosdick's classic study, *American Police Systems*. The Patterson Smith Reprint Series in Criminology, Law Enforcement, and Social Problems has reprinted one hundred titles of studies written in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in response to the increasing academic interest in police work and its related fields.

For recent studies of the development of police services in specific cities, see Richardson, *The New York Police: Colonial Times to 1901*; Lane, *Policing the City: Boston, 1822-1885*; and Eugene J. Watts, "The Police in Atlanta, 1890-1905," *Journal of Southern History* **39** (May, 1973): 165-182.

11. Studies of the British police system abound, but several are outstanding for the period under consideration here. A brief but useful analysis of the Metropolitan Police Act is found in J.L. Lyman's "The Metropolitan Police Act of 1829: An Analysis of Certain Events Influencing the Passage and Character of the Metropolitan Police Act in England," *J.C.L.* **55** (March, 1964): 141-154. The development of the British police system is thoroughly discussed in Charles Reith, *The Blind Eye of History, A Study of the Origins of the Present Police Era* (London, 1956); and Thomas A. Critchley, *A History of Police in England and Wales, 1900-1966* (London, 1967). Samuel G. Chapman's *The Police Heritage in England and America: A Developmental Survey* (East Lansing, 1962) traces the comparative development of police reform in England and the United States with emphasis on the twentieth century. A general survey of the major European police departments during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is found in Raymond B. Fosdick's *European Police System* (New York, 1915).

12. Patrick Colquhoun, *A Treatise on the Police of the Metropolis* (7th edition, 1806; reprint, Montclair, 1969).

13. Although institution of the new police system was primarily Peel's achievement, he owed much to earlier advocates of police reform such as Colquhoun and Jeremy Bentham, particularly in the area of preventive police work and in the ideal of service to the community. See Colquhoun, *A Treatise on the Police of the Metropolis* and Jeremy Bentham, *Works of Jeremy Bentham* (Edinburgh, 1838), vol. 1, Part II.

14. Instructions given by Peel in 1929 to the commissioners of the Metropolitan Police Force, as quoted in Critchley, *A History of Police in England and Wales, 1900-1966*, p. 53.

15. Sir Robert Peel, *The Speeches of...Sir Robert Peel, Bart. Deliveered in the House of Commons* (London, 1853), vol. II, pp. 7, 8, and 789; Charles Stuart Parker, ed., *Sir Robert Peel. From His Private Papers* (London, 1899); Peel, *Speeches*, p. 7.

16. Fosdick, *American Police Systems*, p. 67.